

19/09/2018

Speaker – Denys Denysenko, deputy head of Lugansk Regional Human Rights Center Alternative.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

let me introduce to you the results of the monitoring study that was conducted by ukrainian NGO - Lugansk Regional Human Rights Center Alternative in the framework of the work of the Coalition Human Rights Organizations Justice for Peace in Donbas.

The armed conflict, which has been ongoing for more than four years in Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine, causes significant damage to civilian infrastructure and communications that provide vital resources for the civilian population living in the conflict zone - water supply systems, gas pipelines and electricity grids.

The results of the study of the impact of the armed conflict on the functioning of civilian infrastructure and communications provide reasonable grounds for arguing systematic violations by the parties of the conflict of international humanitarian law as regards the protection of the objects necessary for the survival of the civilian population and the protection of installations and structures containing dangerous forces.

The parties of the conflict do not show constant concern for the preservation of the civilian population and civilian objects, do not take all necessary precautionary measures when choosing means and methods of attack in order to avoid casualties or injuries among the civilian population, as well as accidental damage to civilian objects.

Water supply, gas pipelines and electricity supply facilities have been subjected to and continue to be subjected to armed attacks, which cause numerous breaks in supplying vital resources to civilians living in the conflict zone.

For instance, from 2014, inhabitants of the township of Zaytseve of Donetsk region live without gas and electricity. Since the beginning of military actions Luganskaya thermal power plant has been subjected to bombing more than 80 times.

The shutdown of the Donetsk filtration station that providing water to settlements on both sides of the line of demarcation, in total about 400 thousand inhabitants leads to break in water supply and the announcement of a local level emergency situation in the region.

The repairing works are almost always associated with the risk to the lives and health of community service workers. 5 workers of the Slavyansk Thermal Power Plant were killed as a result of hostilities; 9 people, were injured in varying degrees of severity.

Our recommendations to parties of armed conflict in selected districts of Donetsk and Lugansk regions:

- To waive the to attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population;
- To waive the use of non-selective attacks and non-selective weaponry against objects not used for military purposes;
- To respect the property of civilian objects and not use it for military purposes. Do not place personnel and military equipment at their territory.